

# **\*\*ATTENTION\*\***

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What mitigation options were considered besides the one proposed?

We also considered a) 100% replacement of lost habitat; b) use of primarily public lands for mitigation; c) use of alternate target mitigation parcels and d) substituting enhancement for nontarget Columbia Basin wildlife as mitigation for species affected by Grand Coulee Dam. All these other options are less satisfactory than the proposed option.



What cost-saving measures were used in the proposal?

Habitat protection was substituted for habitat replacement and target mitigation parcels were selected which will replace/protect more than a single Habitat Unit type. These two measures greatly reduced the amount of land needed to achieve mitigation. Easements will be sought as well as fee title purchase, and monitoring was scaled back to minimum necessary levels. All these measures reduced the cost of mitigation actions.

Who will benefit from this proposal?

Citizens who enjoy and/or use wildlife. Because of their close proximity to the area, members of the Colville and Spokane tribes and other residents of northeastern Washington will benefit greatly. However, tourists, Grand Coulee Dam National Recreation Area visitors and citizens in the Pacific Northwest in general will benefit as well.

What wildlife species will benefit?

Because the proposal considers wildlife habitat instead of just individual species, most of the approximately 350 species affected by the project will benefit. This includes game species such as deer and grouse, threatened species such as the bald eagle and non-game species such as songbirds and raptors.

Would the proposed mitigation take land or management rights away from farmers?

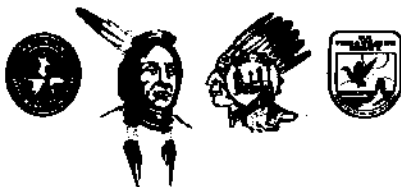
No. Wildlife Commission policy precludes the use of condemnation to acquire mitigation lands. Land and management rights needed would be obtained only from willing sellers.

Won't the proposal take land off the county tax rolls and reduce county revenue?

Not really. Purchase of conservation easements does not alter the taxable status of lands. Further, if the Washington Department of Wildlife holds title, it makes payments to counties in lieu of taxes. These payments are comparable to the taxes that would be derived from that land.

Who developed this proposal?

The proposal was developed cooperatively by the Colville and Spokane tribes, the Washington Department of Wildlife and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in consultation with affected agencies and utilities. The Washington Department of Wildlife served as the lead agency under the funding contract with BPA.



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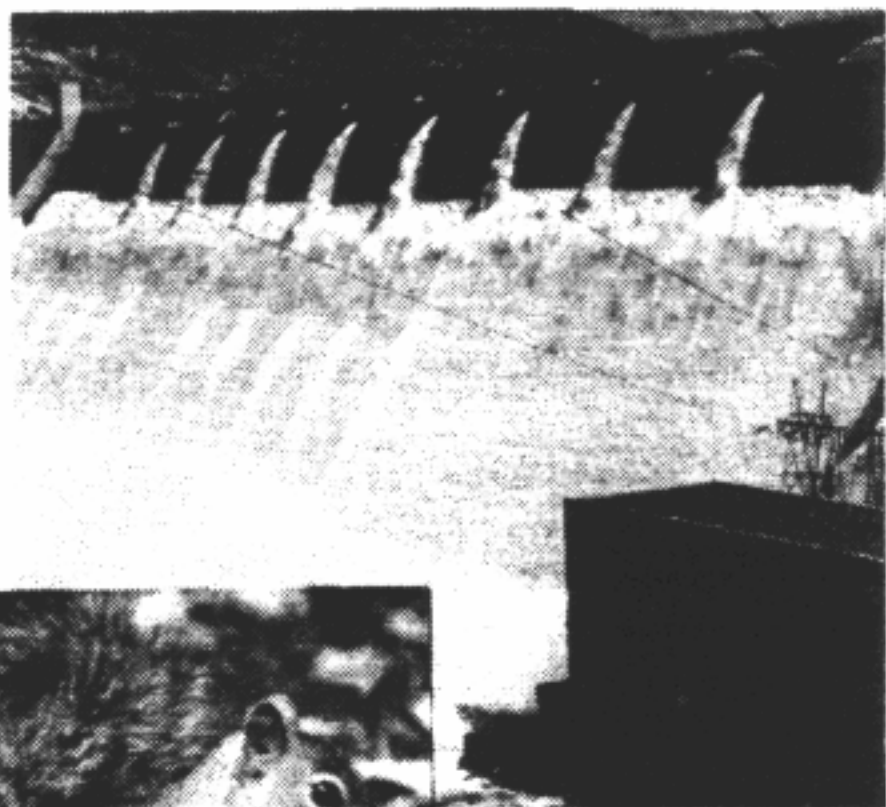
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## PROPOSED WILDLIFE MITIGATION FOR GRAND COULEE DAM



This brochure was prepared by the Washington Department of Wildlife, the Colville and Spokane tribes and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.





## COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT WILDLIFE MITIGATION

### What is mitigation?

Mitigation is an attempt to replace all or nearly all losses caused by projects like the Grand Coulee Dam.

### Is wildlife mitigation really needed?

Yes. Grand Coulee Dam flooded low-elevation and riparian lands which supported about 350 different wildlife species including big game and prairie grouse. These lands were critically important during winter and again during the heat of midsummer. The environment of the Columbia River was the key factor in sustaining many species.

### What is the basis for this mitigation?

The Northwest Electric Power Planning and Conservation Act provides for protection mitigation and enhancement of wildlife to the extent it was affected by hydropower development and operation.

### Aren't wildlife populations in the project area healthy today in spite of the project?

With some exceptions, yes. However, these populations are at lower levels than would be the case without the project because critical habitat was inundated.

### How much wildlife was lost because of the project?

There are no detailed records of wildlife before the project, but based on studies in other parts of the country, we developed population loss estimates for indicator species (e.g. lost 1,675 white-tailed deer, etc.). However, habitat loss is a much more useful concept since wildlife is directly related to habitat, and there are much better records of habitat.

### How much wildlife habitat was lost?

About 70,000 acres equaling 111,785 habitat units. (A habitat unit is one acre of optimum habitat for an individual species. Species were selected to represent a cross-section of habitat affected by the dam.)

### What would it take to replace this loss?

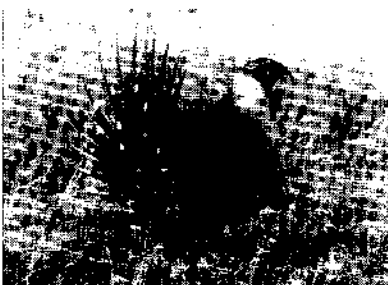
Improvements could be made to lands to create replacement habitat units. Improvements would include

such things as providing cover and water and planting crops used by wildlife. Improvements would increase habitat units by an average of 33%. Therefore three acres of land would have to be improved for every area inundated. Over 200,000 acres of land would have to be improved and managed to fully replace the losses. This habitat replacement would greatly benefit wildlife and the people using the resource, but the cost would be prohibitive.

### What is proposed as mitigation?

We propose to protect or replace only the habitat units that were lost. Approximately 32% of the lost habitat units would be replaced through habitat management and improvement. Lands equivalent to 68% of the lost habitat units would be protected.

This is a significant compromise over straight replacement of habitat units. Wildlife agencies and tribes have agreed to accept habitat protection in lieu of habitat replacement. This would reduce land management needs by two-thirds.



### What is meant by Habitat Protection?

By "protection" we mean take action to ensure that existing habitat is not destroyed in the future. This would be accomplished by signing management agreements for managing public lands, purchasing conservation easements from private landowners, or fee title purchase of land from willing sellers.

Habitat protection by itself does not create any replacement habitat nor does it produce any additional wildlife. It is simply insurance against possible future loss.

If only 32% of the habitat units are replaced, then doesn't that mean that mitigation is only at the 32% level?

For the short term, yes. However, over time the mitigation level would effectively increase because of the protected habitat. Habitat proposed for protection is critical for many species, and some parcels are currently threatened by human activity. Without habitat protection, development would likely occur and gradually reduce the value of unprotected habitat for wildlife. (To replace that loss would require habitat improvement of other lands at a ratio of 3:1 as discussed above.) Habitat protection is insurance against this. Thus, over time the proposed mitigation would be much greater than 32%.

### What about the hydropower cost allocation issue? How much of the proposal should hydropower fund?

We believe 100%. We propose the cost allocation issue be dropped as part of the compromise proposal. Wildlife mitigation would be accepted at the proposed 32% level, and hydropower would agree to fund the proposal in full. We believe this is a significant cost savings for power interests over allocating hydropower a portion of responsibility for mitigation at the 100% level.

Since mitigation is initially at the 32% level, what will prevent BPA from having to adjust the mitigation level or "re-mitigate" Grand Coulee Dam every decade for the life of the project?

We propose that wildlife interests accept the proposal as settlement in return for power interest agreement to fund and implement the proposal in a timely manner.

### What would the proposal cost?

To implement the proposal would cost about 40 million dollars. An estimated additional 1.5 million dollars would be needed each year thereafter for operation, maintenance and monitoring expenses.

### Would operation and maintenance funds be needed in perpetuity?

Yes. Maintaining high-quality habitat as well as routine management such as weed control would result in annual costs for the life of the project. This expense could be easily met by establishing a trust fund, thus eliminating the need for annual funding by BPA.

